

## THE PUBLIC HUMANITIES AND THE ACADEMIC

by Charles Muscatine  
Member  
California Council for the Humanities

At the close of his two-year term as chair of the Federation of State Humanities Councils, Charles Muscatine commented on the consequences of the heightened status state humanities councils have recently achieved in the humanities community and in the nation. One of those consequences, Muscatine said in remarks to the federation's annual conference in Washington, D.C. last October, is that "as good partners we are obliged to address ourselves benevolently and critically to the troubled state of the academic humanities, and its troubled relationship to the good of the public." What follows is an edited excerpt from Muscatine's Washington remarks.

It is time for us to make explicit what has always been implicit in our own commitment: it is time for the academic humanities to be reformed, and we must help reform it.

I say "we" with some pride, but also with some trepidation, having come into a state humanities council only seven or eight years ago after a lifetime in one of the more remote fastnesses of literary scholarship. I have felt in turn amazed, moved, enlisted, and finally empowered by working with council members—most of them lay folks, from many walks of life—for whom the humanities are not a performance or a technique but rather a conviction, not a business but a way of life. This, I have found, is where the action



Charles Muscatine

really is; this, ultimately, is what the scholarship is all about.

People who deal with the humanities not only as ends in themselves but also as essential to our common life force on the academic humanist another point of view; they demand (up to now mostly implicitly) that the academic examine his or her profession from the perspective of the public good. They ask the academic this question: "Your patrons—mostly the public—have provided you haven, security, libraries, and time for study; what are you providing in return?" As the eminent public humanist Geoffrey Chaucer once asked, and we could apply the question to the whole class of the learned: "What amounteth al this wit?"

One answer is that academics are teachers, and that students soon enough become the public,

*I do not know, but simply ask: Does our nation need 30,000 literary researchers?*

and so college teaching is in itself a powerful form of the public humanities, and an honorable return for the public's trust and support. Another is that without scholarship, there would be no higher learning, and without that learning, without books, neither teaching nor public humanities would be possible.

These are good answers, unchallengeable answers, I think. So why is it that they fail to satisfy us when we look at the academic establishment from the point of view of the public?

One reason is that in fact the humanities are not well enough taught. University teaching in the humanities is simply not producing a public of informed readers and critical thinkers commensurate with the public's support. In the "research universities," furthermore, humanities teaching on the graduate level, and increasingly on the undergraduate level—driven by a frantic and misguided specialism itself driven by a frantic careerism—does not even aim at preparing humanists whose work will ultimately recirculate into the body politic. It is rather specialists teaching their specialties to make more specialists in their own image.

There is in academia at present a gross imbalance between the demand for dedicated teachers—that is, public humanists—and the supply. Too many of our academics—goaded on by deans who mistakenly aspire to raise their once honest public teaching colleges to the condition of Harvard—are wasting their spirits and our confidence in the compulsory pursuit of so-called "research."

Of course we need research. There are and will always be in academia scholars and critics of such extraordinary erudition and imagination that not to support them would bring grave deprivation to our culture and to ourselves. (I can hardly imagine, for instance, our proceeding into a civilized future without the recent scholarship on the literature and culture of women and of minority groups.) For this reason, we should support Chairman Hackney

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# Network

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## "MANY CULTURES - ONE NATION" UPDATE



King-Kok Cheung

Many Cultures - One Nation," the Smithsonian Institution's series of programs highlighting themes of diversity will be in Sacramento and in Riverside/San Bernardino during February.

King-Kok Cheung will kick off four days of activities in Sacramento with a keynote address entitled "Living in a Multicultural Society: Thriving on Differences" on February 2.

Carlos Cortés will launch five days of activities in the Inland



Carlos Cortés

Empire on February 9 with his keynote address, "The Great American Balancing Act: Grappling with Diversity in a Changing Society."

"Many Cultures - One Nation" is being presented in 10 cities in California by the Smithsonian Institution in partnership with CCH and Wells Fargo Bank.

For additional information about the February programs, see the events listings in the Humanities Calendar on page 6.

The California Council for the Humanities is a state-based affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Humanities Network is published quarterly and mailed to anyone who requests it from the San Francisco office.



# Grants Awarded

## PUBLIC PROGRAMS

### Road Ways

Sponsor: Victor Valley Museum Association, Apple Valley  
Project Director: Michael Rounds  
Amount of Award: \$24,945 in outright funds  
\$6,000 in matching funds if  
\$12,000 is raised in outside gifts

Connecting Ontario and Victor Valley, California is a sixty-mile stretch of old Route 66, a roadway which played an important role in the American westward migration and which has long represented the restless mobility of modern society. This grant supports the development of a multi-dimensional collaborative project to explore four "road" themes. At the project's center will be an interpretive museum exhibit shared between the Victor Valley Museum and the Museum of History and Art in Ontario, with historical and literary guidebooks, identification games and other materials designed to make the road in between the two museums an extension of the museum experience. The project also includes plans for scholar-led reading-and-discussion and film-and-discussion groups. Exhibits and events are scheduled to begin in the summer of 1995 and extend into the spring of 1996.

### Voices from the Frolic and Beyond

Sponsor: Ukiah Players Theatre, Ukiah  
Project Director: Catherine Bobcock Mogruder  
Amount of Award: \$24,957 in outright funds  
\$750 in matching funds if  
\$1,500 is raised in outside gifts

This grant supports the development and presentation of chautauqua-style dramatizations of local regional characters related to "The Journey of the Frolic" project, a Council-supported collaborative effort examining the far-ranging cultural, historical, and economic effects of the 1850 wreck of the trading ship "Frolic" off the Mendocino Coast. The project includes two concurrent six-month workshops to train participants in techniques of researching, writing, and performing historical dramatizations. The workshops will be followed by performances throughout northern California from July to October 1994.

### The World, the Flesh, and the Devil: Dialogues on Science and the Humanities

Sponsor: Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, UC Riverside  
Project Director: George Slusser  
Amount of Award: \$10,000 in outright funds

This grant funds a series of workplace discussions that seek to use science fiction as a means for bringing about a serious and sustained dialogue between the sciences and the humanities. The series, to be held simultaneously at sites in northern and southern California, will feature panel discussions among scientists, humanists, and science fiction writers, and will explore three distinct themes: "Nature," "Society and Art," and "Philosophy and Religion." The panel discussions are scheduled to begin in October 1994.



## ONTARIO, 1883.

An 1883 postcard view of Ontario, California. Euclid Avenue, part of the route linking the Museum of History and Art in Ontario with the Victor Valley Museum in Apple Valley, is shown in the background. The "Road Ways" project focuses on the roads between these two museums to explore the idea of the "open road" in American history and popular culture. Pencil-drawing postcard courtesy of the Museum of History and Art.

### Historic Wilshire Neon Corridor

Sponsor: Cultural Affairs Department, Los Angeles  
Project Director: Adolfo Nodol  
Amount of Award: \$11,950 in outright funds

Between the two world wars, the 500-block area of Los Angeles known as the Wilshire Corridor was the cultural, commercial, and intellectual center of the city. During that period such novelists as F. Scott Fitzgerald, William Faulkner, John Dos Passos, and Thomas Mann lived in Los Angeles and produced literary works based on their experiences there. This grant supports a series of ten lectures and four reading-and-discussion forums about the cultural heritage of the corridor during the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. Timed to coincide with the restoration of thirty-eight vintage neon signs which once proclaimed the area's vitality, the lectures and discussions begin in February 1994.

### Filipino American Arts Exposition

Sponsor: Philippine Resource Center, San Francisco  
Project Director: Carlos Villo  
Amount of Award: \$4,000 in outright funds  
\$2,000 in matching funds if  
\$4,000 is raised in outside gifts

This grant supports three panel discussions to be held in conjunction with the month-long Filipino American Arts Exposition at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco. Panelists, including historians, folklorists, film critics, and professors of literature and ethnic studies, will examine the history of Filipinos in California and issues surrounding the creation of a Filipino-American identity. Programs will take place on August 3, 4 and 5, 1994.

### Ishi: The Man and His Times, Revisited—A Symposium

Sponsor: Independent Producers Services, Berkeley  
Project Director: N. Jed Riffe  
Amount of Award: \$10,625 in outright funds

In 1911 Ishi, the last Yahi Indian, emerged from the foothills near Oroville where he had been hiding for more than forty years with a dwindling number of Yahi who had survived previous massacres by white settlers. The emergence of Ishi into early twentieth-century California captured the public's imagination and galvanized scholars like Alfred Kroeber, who saw Ishi's appearance as a scientific windfall, to document the traditional ways of life of a "wild, uncontaminated Indian." This public, day-long symposium, which coincides with the publication of an anthology of recent research about Ishi, will re-examine what is known and believed about Ishi's life and times. Participants will also look at how the history and changing practices of anthropology have shaped interpretations of California Indian cultures and at the relationships among the Native American, academic, and popular perceptions of the Ishi story. This symposium will take place at The Oakland Museum on March 26, 1994.



# Grants Awarded

## Writers Week 1994

Sponsor: Creative Writing Department, UC Riverside

Project Director: Stephen Minot

Amount of Award: \$5,000 in outright funds  
\$1,000 in matching funds if  
\$2,000 is raised in outside gifts

This grant supports the seventeenth annual week-long, public conference of writers and poets in Riverside. Among the participants who will be presenting and discussing their works are Kem Nunn, Jeanine Hathaway, Ben Stoltzfus, Mitsuye Yamada, and Peter Matthiessen. Also participating will be Robert Dias LeRoy, writer, producer, and director of "River Bottom," a feature film about the lives of homeless men and women which will be shown and discussed during the conference. Activities will also include a series of scholar-led reading-and-discussion groups focusing on the fiction and philosophical beliefs of Peter Matthiessen. Writers Week begins on February 15, 1994. Reading-and-discussion groups begin at the end of February 1994.

## Silver Editions: Discovery through the Humanities

Sponsor: YMCA of San Francisco

Project Director: Elliott Joseph

Amount of Award: \$5,000 in outright funds

Using thematic anthologies developed by scholars specializing in the humanities, this scholar-led reading-and-discussion series will explore such topics as how the traditions and customs of many groups have shaped California's cultural life, the changes in California's character that occurred between the world wars, how the state's neighborhoods, towns, and cities have developed their unique traits, and how Californians continue to reshape and remake their historical heritage. Reading-and-discussion groups will meet in six to eight week sessions in YMCA branches in San Francisco and Marin counties beginning in March 1994.

## Common Heritage: The Public Trust Doctrine and Mono Lake

Sponsor: KTEH Foundation, San Jose

Project Director: Stephen Fisher

Amount of Award: \$10,000 in matching funds if  
\$20,000 is raised in outside gifts

After more than a decade of one of the most complex and bitterly fought environmental battles in the history of the American West, the Mono Lake issue is about to be resolved. This one-hour television documentary will tell the story of this controversy over rights to water resources, examining the Public Trust Doctrine established by a California Supreme Court decision in 1983 and a host of related environmental, economic, political, legal and moral issues involved in the case which will continue to affect California's management of water resources for years to come. The documentary is scheduled to air over public television in the fall of 1994.

## MEDIA PROJECTS

### PRODUCTION

## Black Is...Black Ain't

Sponsor: Signifyin' Works, Berkeley

Project Director: Marlon T. Riggs

Amount of Award: \$10,000 in outright funds  
\$15,000 in matching funds if  
\$30,000 is raised in outside gifts

Is there an "essence" to black identity? How have changing definitions of blackness shaped—and distorted—concepts of the "black community?" What has the endless search for a "definitive" black identity cost black and nonblack Americans? These are a few of the questions that will be examined in this feature-length film. The project will use a blend of interviews, media analysis, dance, cinema verite, biographical profiles, poetry, performance and music and will include the contributions of such noted African American scholars and cultural critics as Molefi Assante, Angela Davis, Michael Franti, bell hooks, Patricia Turner, Michele Wallace, and Cornel West.

## The Last Italians

Sponsor: Bay Area Video Coalition, San Francisco

Project Director: Domenic Stansberry

Amount of Award: \$35,000 in matching funds if  
\$70,000 is raised in outside gifts

Fifty years ago, more than 50,000 Italians lived in San Francisco's North Beach. Today, this Italian-American neighborhood has all but vanished. Focusing on the historical development of the Italian-American community of North Beach—and its interaction with such groups as the Chinese immigrant community and the Beats—this one-hour documentary film seeks to illuminate contemporary concerns about ethnic identity and such issues as immigration, assimilation and cultural preservation.

## Wallace Stegner: The Conscience of a Writer

Sponsor: Western Heritage of California, Berkeley

Project Director: Stephen Fisher

Amount of Award: \$2,500 in outright funds  
\$2,500 in matching funds if  
\$5,000 is raised in outside gifts

This grant supports the completion of a one-hour documentary video exploring the life and career of Wallace Stegner, the acclaimed writer, historian, teacher and environmentalist who died on April 13, 1993. Narrated by Robert Redford, the documentary will use interviews with scholars, friends and Stegner himself, archival footage, readings from Stegner's work, and musical interludes to explore the context in which Stegner lived and worked and to examine the public impact of his vision of the American West.

## The Men Who Sailed the Liberty Ships

Sponsor: KTEH-TV, San Jose

Project Director: Maria Brooks

Amount of Award: \$11,000 in matching funds if  
\$22,000 is raised in outside gifts

This grant supports the production of a one-hour television documentary film about the experiences of American merchant seamen who sailed the liberty ships during World War II. Liberty ships carried nearly eighty percent of the supplies and materiel used by the Allies during the second world war. While the U.S. armed forces were racially segregated, these merchant ships were frequently manned by integrated crews, often with blacks, whites, Asians, gays, and the young and very old working together without serious conflict. These seamen, whose lives and wartime contributions have been largely ignored, sailed into every theater of war, sustaining high casualties, but received few of the postwar benefits of military service.



Crew of a World War II liberty ship. The lives of the seamen who sailed these merchant vessels will be explored in "The Men Who Sailed the Liberty Ships."

Photo courtesy of the National Maritime Union Collection, Rutgers, New Jersey



# Grants Awarded

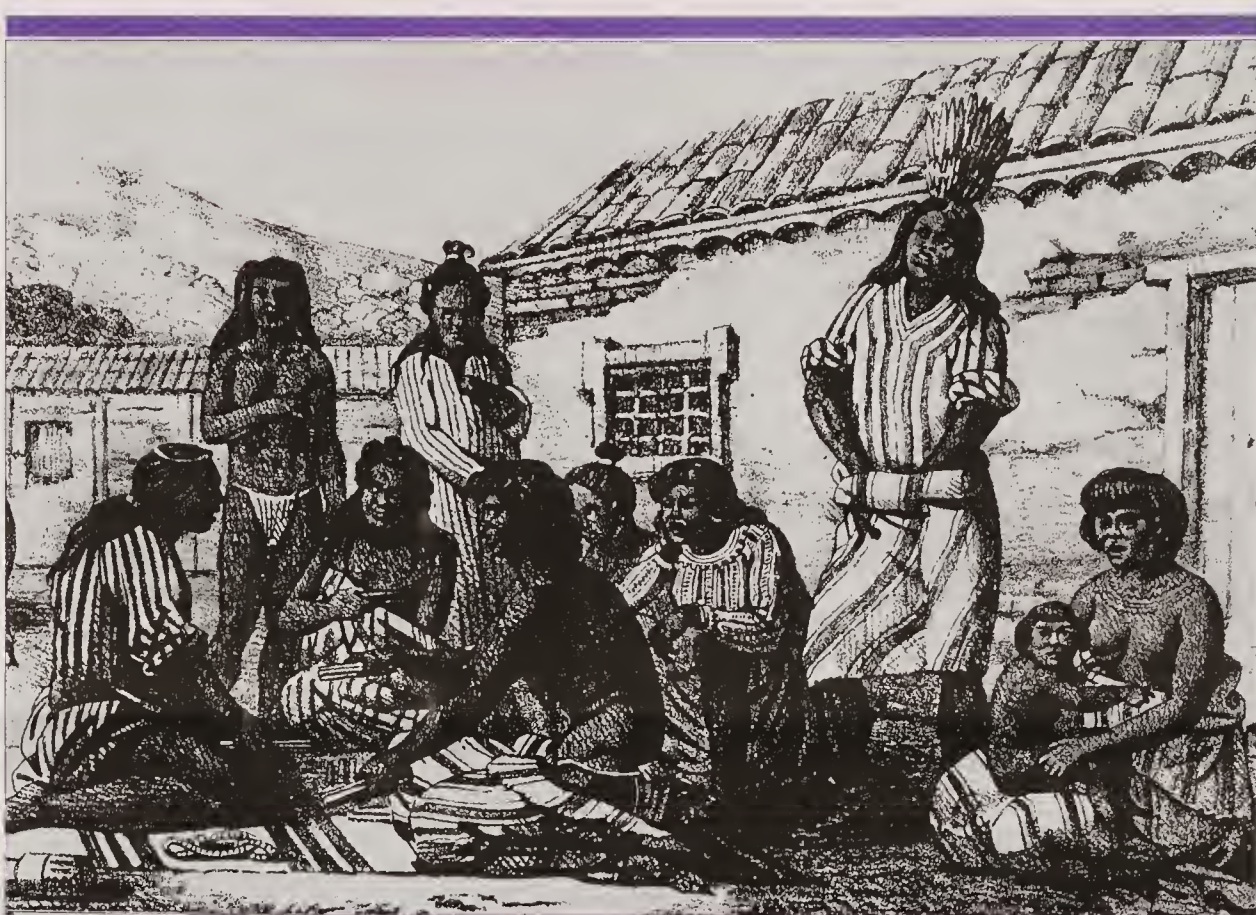
## The San Francisco History Project, Program One: The Mission

Sponsor: KQED, Inc., San Francisco

Project Director: Peter L. Stein

Amount of Award: \$30,000 in matching funds if \$60,000 is raised in outside gifts

This grant supports the production of a one-hour television documentary about the history of San Francisco's Mission District, one of the city's oldest neighborhoods, with a multi-layered past. The program, the first in a ten-part series of San Francisco neighborhood histories, will document the rich cultural influences that wave upon wave of newcomers have had on the neighborhood and will explore how the neighborhood's possession, dispossession and repossession by different immigrant groups illustrate the effects of conflicting cultural assumptions and such American political ideas as Manifest Destiny, upward social mobility and the rights of the working man.



Louis Choris pictured Indians playing the "stick game" at Mission Dolores in 1816. A program about the history of the Mission District is the first in KQED's ten-part television series of neighborhood histories in "The San Francisco History Project."

## S C R I P T S

## KPFA and the American Century

Sponsor: Film Arts Foundation, San Francisco

Project Director: Veronica Selver

Amount of Award: \$10,000 in outright funds

Founded in 1949 in Berkeley, KPFA was among the first community radio stations that depended on volunteers for programming ideas and staff and relied on listeners for most of its financial support. Though often racked from within by bitter ideological clashes and criticized from without for its left-leaning programming, KPFA has been an important forum for political dissidence and has played an important role as an advocate for the constitutional guarantees of free speech and free expression. This one-hour video documentary script will examine KPFA's history within the context of the Cold War era, exploring themes of community and dissidence and raising questions about notions of the common good, about conflicting political values in American society and about the role and responsibilities of the broadcast media in a democratic society.

## Comrades and Chicken Ranchers

Sponsor: Western Public Radio, San Francisco

Project Director: Leo C. Lee

Amount of Award: \$9,995 in outright funds

Starting in 1903, Jewish immigrants escaping wars and pogroms in Eastern Europe began settling in Petaluma, establishing by the end of the 1920s a community of radical Jewish chicken ranchers, one of the few such agricultural communities outside of Palestine and Israel. Through interviews, historical commentary, and archival recordings, this scripting project for a three-part radio documentary will explore the history and development of this community over three generations, focusing both on how the evolution of this particular community was influenced by local, national, and international events and on how "community" itself is made and unmade in modern America.

## The California Indians Radio Project

Sponsor: Northern California Cultural Communications, Hoopo

Project Director: Rhoby Cook

Amount of Award: \$10,000 in outright funds  
\$15,000 in matching funds if  
\$30,000 is raised in outside gifts

This grant supports the development of seven half-hour segments of a thirteen-part radio series exploring the cultures of California Indians. Interweaving recorded archival material, dramatizations from historical records, and interviews with scholars, tribal historians and tribal elders, the series will look at how Native American cultures of California changed as a result of contacts with Russian and other European settlers. Focusing on such areas as family and social structure, tribal governance, spirituality, education, territorial agreements and methods of conflict resolution, the series will also examine the value of contemporary cultural revitalization efforts. The series will be distributed by AIROS (American Indians Radio on Satellite), which serves over 300 public radio stations nationwide.

## M I N I G R A N T S

THE ANTHENAUM MUSIC & ARTS LIBRARY, LA JOLLA. \$1,500. For the lecture series "The Artificial City: Concepts, Dreams, and Realities," which examines the development of the urban environment in San Diego and Southern California.

WOMEN'S HERITAGE MUSEUM, SAN FRANCISCO. \$1,500. To support lectures, panels, and other events during a book fair, promoting greater public understanding of the contributions of women to history.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA REVELS. \$700. To support two seminars about quilting traditions to be held during the sponsor's annual Christmas performance.

SONOMA COUNTY MUSEUM. \$1,500. For lectures, panels, and other public humanities events associated with the museum's "Festival Latino" exhibition.

BERKELEY ART CENTER. \$1,350. For "Cultural Appropriation: Who Benefits?" a symposium held in conjunction with the exhibition "Asian Roots, Western Soil: Japanese Influences in American Culture."

REDWOOD CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY. \$750. For the discussion series "The Road to Oklahoma!: The Development of the American Musical, 1865-1943."

CALIFORNIA COLLEGE OF ARTS AND CRAFTS, OAKLAND. \$1,500. For "Color in the Shadows: A Symposium on Cyberart."

FRIENDS OF THE LODI LIBRARY. \$698. To support a lecture/discussion led by Valerie Matsumoto, author of *Sustaining Fruit: Family, Farm and Community Among Japanese Americans*.



"Grape Picker" by Candido Morales is one of the photographs exhibited during "Festival Latino." Photo courtesy of the Sonoma County Museum.



# NEH CHAIRMAN PROPOSES A "NATIONAL CONVERSATION"

In a November 1993 speech to the National Press Club, Sheldon Hackney, the new chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), called the increasingly heated public discussions of cultural values "drive-by debates" in which "real answers are the casualties" and proposed a "national conversation in which all voices need to be heard and in which we must grapple seriously with the meaning of American pluralism."

Citing CCH's 1991 "Longing for Community" reading-and-discussion program in Riverside/San Bernardino as an example of humanities projects that "have already started people talking to each other about who we are as a nation and what holds us together," Hackney announced that NEH will spend some of its time and energy, "and a little bit of our money," to stimulate and facilitate that national discussion.

In the following excerpt from his speech, Hackney, who came to NEH in August after serving for 12 years as the president of the University of Pennsylvania, outlined some of his own initial impressions of what that conversation might mean.

**M**y own notion of the meaning of American pluralism is still evolving, and in any case is certainly not prescriptive, yet it might help for me to sketch some elements of it here. My answer has as its preface a belief that there is an American identity that is different from the identities of any one of the ethnic groups that comprise the American population, that is inclusive of all of them, and that is available to everyone who is American. It is an identity that has been shaped by the buffeting and melding of individuals and groups in North America over the last three hundred years.

I believe that the most important thing that we share as Americans is a belief in our political system, in the values that are



Sheldon Hackney

enshrined in the Constitution, and in the open democratic system for determining who makes and enforces the laws, and that the laws should be consistent with those principles.

Further, in the land of opportunity, we believe in equal economic opportunity for individuals. We know that we do not provide perfect equality of opportunity, but it is an ideal that we hold dear, and we have historically provided enough opportunity to keep individual hope alive and to maintain faith in the ideal.

We also have a history that belongs to all Americans, whenever their ancestors happened to have migrated to these shores. That history is a proud one, but it has some dark spots, and we must come to terms with those imperfections as well as the glories. I am a white southern male, but I claim as part of my own story the experiences of Italians and Irish and Jews coming into America through Ellis Island in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and the experiences of African Americans who lived in the South with my ancestors and saw it from their own point of view, or more recently the experiences of South

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*If the conversation works well, we will stake out some common ground, and by doing that we will make it possible to celebrate more fully the variations among us.*

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Asians and Latinos. My story should be theirs as well, and we all possess together the national story, the resultant of many different vectors, the story of our being able to find solutions, to rise to historical challenges, and find ways to transform particular interests into the national interest.

Beyond these fundamental building blocks, there are certain precepts that might help us as we go through the discussion of what it means to be American. The traditional way of handling cultural differences has been to think about a public sphere and a private sphere. In the public sphere only universalistic rules are legitimate and only individual rights are legally protected. In the private sphere, we can give voice and form to our birthright identities without being any less American. This distinction still goes a long way in sorting out the conflicts between the universal and the particular.

Indeed, if there is no distinction between the public and the private, all values would be up for political adjudication, and that is not a system I find very attractive. One of the factors causing the current sense of urgency about this subject is the feeling that the public or political sphere has been encroaching on the private sphere. "Let your culture be your politics," the cultural radicals of the 1960s chanted. "All politics are personal, and all personal relationships are political," assert some contempo-

rary activists. Where in all of this are the ordinary virtues that we ought to be able to expect from each other? Perhaps they can emerge from the conversation.

It helps also to realize that all ethnic groups have permeable boundaries, and that the meaning of any particular identity will change over time. What it felt like to be a white Southerner in 1865 is different from what it felt like in 1950 and it is different again today. What it means to be a Jew in America is different today from what it was in 1940. History has a way of changing who we think we are.

The subject is elusive, but it is very important. If the conversation works well, we will stake out some common ground, and by doing that we will make it possible to celebrate more fully the variations among us that play against each other and reinforce each other to produce a dynamic national identity. As President Clinton said in a different context at the dedication of the Holocaust Memorial Museum, "We must find in our diversity our common humanity. We must reaffirm that common humanity, even in the darkest and deepest of our own disagreements."

In that spirit, I am looking forward to this conversation among the American people. In that spirit, I challenge you to help focus the attention of the American people on this quest for the meaning of *E Pluribus Unum*.

## "COMMON THREADS"

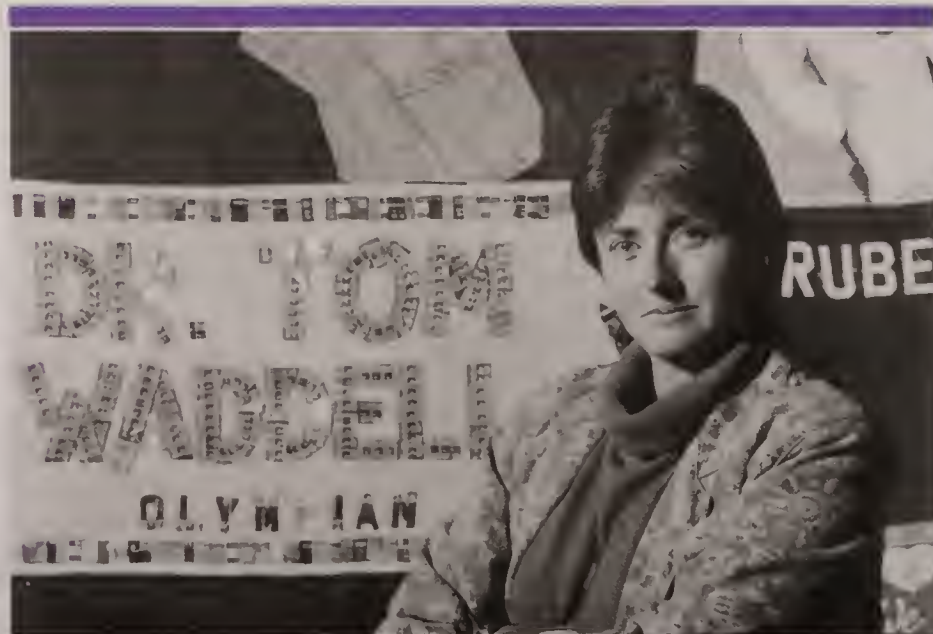
**C**apturing the essence of a human being on a piece of cloth six feet by three feet. That is the task hundreds of people have undertaken to remember and honor those they have lost to AIDS.

An Academy Award-winning film by Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman, *Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt* explores the lives of five diverse people who died from AIDS and whose lives are commemorated in the Names Project Memorial Quilt. In the process of exploring individual stories, the film, in a profound way, uncovers the means by which people deal

with illness and death, as well as the processes we create to assign meaning to the lives of those we have loved.

*Common Threads* is one of 36 films included in the Council's Film & Speaker minigrant program. Through this program, the Council awards a small grant to a non-profit organization to rent and screen one of the films, followed by a scholar-led discussion of issues and themes explored in the film.

For additional information about the Council's Film & Speakers minigrant program, contact Stan Yogi at 415/391-1474.



Sara Lewinstein recalls her life with Dr. Tom Waddell, a decathlon star who competed in the 1968 Summer Olympics, in one of the threads of the Academy Award-winning film "Common Threads."



## WINTER Calendar

*The public humanities programs listed here received funding support from the California Council for the Humanities. Please note that dates and times should be confirmed with local sponsors. These listings are often provided to the Council well before final arrangements are made.*

### EXHIBITS

**Through Feb. 20** "Festival Latino" is a retrospective exhibition about the Latino population of Sonoma County. The festival also includes lectures, presentations, and panel discussions of such topics as Latino folk culture, the history of Sonoma County's Latino community, and Pre-Colombian legends and philosophy. At the Sonoma County Museum, 425 Seventh Street, Santa Rosa. 707/579-1500.

**Mar. 5 - Apr. 25** "Audubon's Animals and Birds" is an exhibition examining the works of John James Audubon as art and as statements about American and European attitudes toward the wilderness and the American West. At the Community Memorial Museum of Sutter County, 1333 Butte House Road, Yuba City. 916/741-7141.

**Through Mar. 26** "Textile Diaries" is a traveling exhibition of quilts from the Kansas State Historical Society and the Kansas Quilt Project. It examines quilts as "cultural markers" or personal diaries that record the personal and community events in the lives of quilters and quilt recipients. At the Grace Hudson Museum, 431 S. Main Street, Ukiah. 707/462-3370.



"Barred Owl," a hand-colored lithograph by John James Audubon, is part of the "Audubon's Animals and Birds" exhibit at the Community Memorial Museum of Sutter County beginning March 5. Photo courtesy of the Community Memorial Museum.

**Apr. 2 - July 31** "Runs, Hits and an Era: The Pacific Coast League, 1903-1958" is an exhibition of photographs, vintage memorabilia and rare video footage from the early days West Coast baseball. A program of lectures, film-and-discussion groups and other events looking at the Pacific Coast League and its relationship to California culture and social history accompany the exhibition. At The Oakland Museum, 1000 Oak, Oakland. 510/834-2413.

**Apr. 8 - Aug. 9** "Seeds of Change" is a traveling exhibit from the Smithsonian Institution exploring 500 years of encounter and exchange among Native American and European peoples. At the Sonoma County Museum, 425 Seventh Street, Santa Rosa. 707/579-1500.

### EVENTS

**Feb. 2 - 5** "Many Cultures - One Nation" in Sacramento is one of 10 programs presented in California by the Smithsonian Institution in partnership with CCH and Wells Fargo Bank. In a keynote address King-Kok Cheung, associate professor of English/Asian American studies at UCLA, will discuss "Living in a Multicultural Society: Thriving on Differences." This event will be held in room 4203 of the State Capitol Building at 7:30 p.m. on February 2. Other events include lectures on such topics as "Asians, Aliens and Science Fiction in America: 1926-1945" and "Railroads and Cultural Diversity." For information, contact the Crocker Art Museum at 916/264-5423.

**Feb. 9 - 13** "Many Cultures - One Nation" in Riverside/San Bernardino. In a keynote address Carlos Cortés, professor of history at UC Riverside, will discuss "The Great American Balancing Act: Grappling with Diversity in a Changing Society." This event will be held at the Chaffey College Theater, 5885 Haven Avenue, Rancho Cucamonga at 7 p.m. on February 9. Other events at various sites include lectures on such topics as "Crosscurrents of Modernism: Four Latin American Pioneers" and "Black America and the American Dream." For information, contact Karen Kraut at 909/888-3113.



Ceremonies mark the first night game in Oakland, held in 1932. From the "Runs, Hits and an Era" exhibition opening April 2 at the Oakland Museum.



**Feb. 12** "Diversity and Affinity: Redefining Our American Culture" is a talk by Dean Cecilia Preciado Burciaga of Stanford University which is presented as part of the "Festival Latino." 1 p.m. At the Sonoma County Museum, 425 Seventh Street, Santa Rosa. 707/579-1500.

**Feb. 15 - 19** "Writers Week" is the 17th annual public conference of writers and poets sponsored by the creative writing department of UC Riverside. Events include daily poetry readings and related reading-and-discussion groups. This year's featured reader is Peter Matthiessen, author of *At Play in the Fields of the Lord* and *The Snow Leopard*. For times and locations, please call 909/787-5312.

**Feb. 16** "Thomas Jefferson in Willows" is a chautauqua performance in which Clay Jenkinson will portray the nation's third president. 7 p.m. Willows Intermediate School of Achievement, 1145 Cedar Street, Willows. Contact Pat Silva at 916/934-7755 for more information.



Clay Jenkinson as Thomas Jefferson.

**Feb. 22** "The Development of an American Voice, 1900-1929" is the second lecture/discussion in "The Road to Oklahoma!" series, which examines the development of the American musical between 1865 and 1943. 7:30 p.m. At the Redwood City Public Library, 1044 Middlefield Road. For more information, 415/780-7061.

**Feb. 23** The "Color in Shadows Symposium" will examine the impact of science and technology on culture and art, with lectures by Vivian Sobcheck, dean of UCLA's School of Media, Film and Communication, and Manuel DeLanda, author of *War in the Age of Intelligent Machines*. 7:30 p.m. At Nahl Hall, California College of Arts and Crafts, 5212 Broadway, Oakland. 510/653-8118 ext. 198.

**Mar. 12 - 13** "Border Voices Multicultural Poetry Fair" in San Diego features readings, workshops, and panel discussions with such noted poets as Philip Levine, Marilyn Chin and Quincy Troupe. 10 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. daily. The Organ Pavilion, Casa del Prado and other nearby Balboa Park venues. 619/293-2239 for more information.

**Mar. 15** "The Literary Landscape of Los Angeles, 1920-1942" is a lecture by David Fine, professor of English at CSU, Long Beach. It is the first in the "Historic Wilshire Authors in Place" lecture series. La Brea Tar Pits/Hancock Park, Los Angeles. Contact the Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department at 213/485-2433.

**Mar. 19** The Grace Hudson Museum sponsors a day-long program of lectures, discussions and quilt sharing as part of the "Textile Diaries" exhibition. Speakers include nationally-known quilt historian Julie Silber, quilt artist Linda MacDonald, and Rod Kiracofe, author of *The American Quilt*. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. The Grace Hudson Museum and the Sun House, 431 South Main, Ukiah. 707/462-3370.

**Mar. 22** "Jazz, Depression, and the Talkies: 1930-1943" is the third lecture/discussion in "The Road to Oklahoma!" series. 7:30 p.m. At the Redwood City Public Library, 1044 Middlefield Road. 415/780-7061.

**Mar. 22 - Apr. 26** "The Remembered Past: 1914-1945" is one of the weekly reading-and-discussion groups in the YMCA's "Silver Editions" series. This group meets every Tuesday at 2 p.m. at the Marin YMCA, 1500 Los Gatos, San Rafael. For more information, please call Lloyd Licher at 415/492-9622.

**Mar. 23 - Apr. 27** "In the Old Ways" is one of the weekly reading-and-discussion groups in the "Silver Editions" series. This group will meet every Wednesday at 10 a.m. and focus on how traditions and customs of America's many peoples have shaped our social and cultural life. Mission YMCA, 4080 Mission Street, San Francisco. Contact Gloria Garcia, 415/586-6900.

**Mar. 24 - Apr. 28** "Portraits and Pathways" is one of the weekly reading-and-discussion groups in the "Silver Editions" series. This group, which meets every Thursday at 10:30 a.m., will focus on the experiences of aging as expressed by writers, painters, and photographers. Richmond District YMCA, 360 18th Avenue, San Francisco. Contact Robin Fogel at 415/668-2060.

**Mar. 24** Historian Kevin Starr is the first speaker in "The Artificial City: Concepts, Dreams, and Realities" series, which examines the development of the urban environment in San Diego and Southern California. 7:30 p.m. The Athenaeum Library, 1008 Wall Street, La Jolla. 619/454-5872.



Ishi

**Mar. 26** "Ishi: The Man and His Times, Revisited" is a day-long symposium that will re-examine what is known and believed about Ishi, the last survivor of the Yahi Indian tribe. The panel will also look at how changing practices of history and anthropology have shaped interpretations of California Indian cultures. At The Oakland Museum, 1000 Oak, Oakland. For information, call 510/834-2413.

**Apr. 5 - May 10** "Exploring Local History" is one of the weekly reading-and-discussion groups in the "Silver Editions" series. This group meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the YMCA at 220 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco. Contact Jane Holt at 415/885-0460.

**Apr. 21** Artist/writer June Wayne is the featured speaker in "The Artificial City: Concepts, Dreams, and Realities" series. 7:30 p.m. The Athenaeum Library, 1008 Wall Street, La Jolla. 619/454-5872.

**Apr. 27** "Family, Farm and Community" is a lecture exploring historical and cultural change in a Central Valley Japanese American farming community. Lecturer Valerie Masumoto is the author of *Sustaining Fruit: Family, Farm and Community Among Japanese Americans*. 7 p.m. Lodi Public Library, 201 West Locust Street. Contact Robin Knowlton, Friends of Lodi Public Library. 209/368-8269.



# REINVENTING NATURE: TOWARD A NATIVE AMERICAN UNDERSTANDING

The three-day "Reinventing Nature: Recovering the Wild" conference held at UC Davis in October brought together nearly two hundred scholars, environmentalists, government representatives, business people, and interested community members to discuss environmental issues and attitudes in a broad, humanistic context. Drawing on four nature-oriented subdisciplines—environmental philosophy, environmental history, the art and literature of nature, and the study of biodiversity and bioregionalism—conference speakers and panelists explored cultural preconceptions about the appropriate relationship of human beings to the "natural" world. The conference discussions were meant to inform the public policy debate by helping to define national and international goals in the study of wild areas and by examining the problems of formulating and implementing a long-term public policy of land management.

The following is an edited excerpt from Inés Hernández-Avila's prepared remarks during the "Toward a Native American Understanding of Recovering the Wild" panel discussion. Hernández-Avila is a professor of Native American studies at UC Davis.

**M**y remarks are in response to some, not all, of the questions raised in the conference materials we received prior to this convening.

In those materials we were told that "for pragmatic purposes the conference will assume at the outset that wilderness refers to land whose ecological processes are more or less free from human intervention." Because "wilderness" thus defined assumes uninhabited land, it would be hard for native people to have this concept, since each region of this hemisphere is someone's landbase. And in fact, I have never heard a native person refer to any land as wilderness.

I am reminded by this question of the "Identifying Identities" Minority Discourse conference which took place at UC Berkeley in early March of 1992. During one of the sessions, after a remark I made concerning this question of landbase, a man (who happened to be white) commented, "Why speak of landbase? Native Americans and Chicanos can, but no one else can, so why don't we speak of landscape, with which everyone can identify?"

I was quite interested in the fact that this man did not see himself, or anyone but Chicanos and Native Americans, in relation to a landbase. Since he could not, he sought the metaphor—he argued for landscape. It seems to me that the concepts of "landscape," "wilderness," "nature" all represent Western ideological perceptions, intellectualizations of the land, of the earth, and it occurs to me that when European Americans (in particular) intellec-



The Native American panel at "The Reinventing Nature" conference at UC Davis included (left to right), Frank LaPena, Inés Hernández-Avila, Nora Dauenhauer, and Johnny Moses.

tualize (and sometimes romanticize) in such a way, they are perhaps exhibiting a nostalgia for their own landbases. Furthermore, it strikes me as rather appropriate that the popular environmental movement has been carried out initially by white people, given what we know of the history of many of their ancestors with respect to degradation of the earth.

It is my understanding that native people in this hemisphere regard the earth not only as a mother, but as a teacher. "Place" has always been a critical component of the identity of native peoples. Indeed, as I wrote earlier in an essay called "Tejana Intonations," "the distinct landbase . . . of a people informs and nourishes their culture, and in a precisely detailed manner directs the movement and meaning of their ceremonies. Through careful observation and the development of a respectful and intimate relationship with their landbases, each indigenous population learn(ed) from their teacher how to live in harmony with their environment and how to sustain themselves through the changing seasons."

In the way that I was brought up, the notion of the earth is not some romanticized or ephemeral or even exclusively global concept. In the same way that Chicano historian Juan Gómez-Quiñones and Chicana literary critic Teresa McKenna make it clear that the concept of "border" is not a metaphor, but rather a history, I want to make it clear today that the concept of the earth, or the land, is not simply a metaphor for the planet on which we live, but rather a concrete relationship with the land which encompasses the physical, geographical, personal, historical, spiritual, emotional, mythical aspects of the "culture" that manifests this relationship in so many forms.

Perhaps the most important manifestation of this relationship is language. I am drawn to the

work of Acoma writer Simon Ortiz who, in his essay "Song, Poetry and Language—Expression and Perceptions," explains that in his language a word or word phrase, a poem or a song, is simultaneously perception and expression. His father carving a sculpture of an old man, a ceremonial dancer, sings as he works, and the sculpture and the song are at once of and for the old man. John Archuleta, from Taos Pueblo, is a Ford Fellow at the University of Arizona who is writing his dissertation on the perception and expression of water—"the discourse of water," as he calls it—in the language of his people.

Last April I attended "The Land and the Human Presence" conference at Bucknell University in Pennsylvania. The gathering consisted of about forty invited participants, seventeen of whom were Native American. During one of our conversations a small group of mostly native people was sharing impressions of the visit with each other. Alberta Billy, a native woman from Quathiaski Cove, British Columbia, told us this story.

She said she went for a walk and paused at an outdoor sculp-

ture on the Bucknell campus that was created by an Iroquois artist to honor the Iroquois concept of the seven generations. The sculpture begins with a metal outline of a person standing tall at the front of the installation. There are five other metal outlines of persons equidistant from each other, each succeeding one smaller than the previous one. When you view the entire installation from the front you can see through to the sixth metal outline, which has an embryo to represent the seventh generation. As Alberta began to meditate and to pray, a little squirrel came up to stand within the frame of the first figure and put its little paws together and waited with her. She noticed that it continued to accompany her as she moved from one figure to the next, each time moving into the frame of the metal outline, each time putting its little hands together. When she was done, it went off about its business, after she had thanked it for its support.

Alberta delighted in telling us this story, and she prompted me to ask each of the group how to say "squirrel" in their languages. I was struck that the Navajo word (told to me by John Cook) focuses on the fluffiness of the tail, while the Ojibway word carries body movement with it when it is said, according to the elder who was with us in that conversation, Keewaydinoquay Kee Peschel from St. James, Michigan. In her language you say "a-ji-dó-mo" for squirrel with a movement from left to right, frontwards and backwards according to each syllable, in the same way that a little squirrel might move.

I need to emphasize what I feel are the limitations of the English language. Even though I grew up in a bilingual environment, speaking English and Spanish, and love them both, I am quite aware of the high price that has been paid so that I would be able to speak these invaders' languages in order not to be dominated. I fully understand that language imposed is the instru-



Poet Gary Snyder, shown here talking with conference participants from the Davis community, was also a presenter and participant in the "Reinventing Nature" discussions.



# OF RECOVERING THE WILD

ment of empire, even in ostensibly friendly settings such as this conference. And in the context of our discussions here, I am even more moved at the senseless destroying of languages that has occurred systematically as a project of colonization, and at the incredible presumptuousness of a society that still for the most part insists on "English Only." I agree with Kirkpatrick Sale who writes in *The Conquest of Paradise* that "There is only one way to live in America, and there can be only one way, and that is as Amercians—the original Americans—for that is what the earth of America demands. We have tried for five centuries to resist that simple truth. We resist it further only at risk of the imperilment—worse, the likely destruction—of the earth."

I would add, however, that the original Americans must be supported in every way possible in the retrieval and sustenance of their/our languages, for in those languages are profound understandings for all of us about the part of the earth that is this hemisphere, understandings which might radically inform our relationships with the "natural" world.

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Another conference question asks "Are primitive and traditional people closer to nature and are their societies more stable?"

What, I wonder, does "primitive" mean? What does "traditional" mean? What do the two mean together? As a native person, am I to find myself in this question? Does our panel fit within this question? Will some or all of our presentations be suspect because we are out in the world? Who will presume to have the authority to valorize one or the other of our presentations over the rest? What does "nature" mean? Closer than whom? And who is defining stability? "More stable" than what?

If "primitive" and "traditional" refer to indigenous people, then the question implies that "these people" exist in a vacuum or a bubble somehow outside, or on the side, of mainstream society. If that is so, then perhaps this notion of "primitive and traditional people" (and their implicit marginalization), fits the image of the "ideal Indian" that Mayan scholar Irma Otoy has so aptly described in her essay *"Imágenes del Indio: Generación y Regeneración"* ["Images of the Indian: Generation and Regeneration"].

Otoy says, "*Esta es una imagen mas 'humanitaria' del indio porque aqui no se le aniquila sino se le abstrae, se le busca como indio prototipo*" ["This is a more 'humanitarian' image of the Indian because here he is not annihilated but abstracted; he is sought as the prototypical Indian"]. She goes

“

*What constitutes degradation is the desacralization of the earth, and of life, and the invalidation of those traditions which are trying to hold the earth and all life sacred.*

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on to say that the creation of "indios mitológicos" ["mythological Indians"] does not allow for and is not conducive to seeing Indians as people and as persons who decide, create, and protagonize their own humanity. "*La naturalización de los indios mitológicos por sobre los indios vivientes es una hegemonía intelectual*" ["The naturalization of mythological Indians over living Indians is an intellectual hegemony"].

For me these points also relate to three other conference questions: "How significantly have human beings degraded the earth? What constitutes degradation? Is it reversible?"

I believe that what constitutes degradation is the desacralization of the earth, and of life, and the invalidation (literally the "making invalid") of those traditions which held and are trying to hold the earth and all life (not only human life) sacred. What constitutes degradation is denial of the creative spirit to most of life as it exists, including human life. The creative spirit has been perverted, commodified, and appropriated by those who can afford it or who take it by entitlement. The logic of capitalist accumulation and consumption which antagonizes the earth contributes to this degradation just as much as do institutionalized religions which abhor the flesh, perpetuate notions of sin, and dislocate humans from the earth.

Is degradation reversible? Yes. I have been taught that the earth purifies herself, either harmoniously or by blows; she does what she has to, as we saw with the floods that recently hit the Midwest.

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In closing, I would like to address the question "How must the moral imperatives of environmentalism change once we recognize that nature itself is historical, dynamic, and at least in part culturally constructed?" I do so by telling two stories.

In 1987 I went to Cuba for two weeks as a participant in the 18th Contingent of the Venceremos Brigade. On one of the days that we were given to visit different sites, I chose to go to the Santería Museum. One part of the mu-

seum consisted of replicas of home altars as they had been when this religious expression was practiced more. On some of the altars I was surprised to see plaster of paris statues of Plains-style Indians which had been painted by hand. I was stunned to learn of the curator's response when people asked him why the statues were there. He said, "Oh, we always pay our respects to the original peoples of these lands and we always ask their permission to be here." Upon my return I rushed to tell a Paiute elder who is dear to me of the news; he simply nodded his head in affirmation.

Last spring at Eastertime my husband and I had the good fortune to attend the Yaqui Easter *pahko* ceremonies in Arizona. On Easter Sunday we were at Barrio Libre where we were privileged to see Luis Maso Cienfuegos as the Deer. As the procession began, we were invited to have responsibility; my husband was asked to carry one of the poles of the canopy that shaded the sacred image, and I was asked to carry one end of an arch of paper flowers under which the entire procession passed even as we walked. From my vantage point, I could see the Deer leading us; I could see his head clearly as he gestured to us and showed us the way, opening the paths for us.

Even though I was raised Roman Catholic on my dad's

side, my Nimipu mom has effectively (and effortlessly) subverted the rigidity of that training all my life, and I have rejected the patriarchal foundations of Catholicism. However, I was still moved in a way I had not expected when I saw the Deer lead us up to the altar and when I understood what he had done, this emissary from *seyewailo*, this *saila maso*, little brother deer. He had led his pueblo to pay respects to the imported religion, the Catholic religion; he had led us respectfully to the altar; he had taken that responsibility on himself for the people.

In both of these stories there are lessons and examples. How many peoples besides the *santeros* have paid their respects to the spirits of this land and asked their permission to be here? How many religious traditions which have been embraced by native peoples of this hemisphere have in turn paid their respects to the traditions of indigenous peoples?

Vine Deloria, Jr., says, in his "Afterward" to the volume *America in 1492*, "From an Indian point of view, the general theme by which to understand the history of the hemisphere would be the degree to which the whites [I would add all immigrants] have responded to the rhythms of the land—the degree to which they have become indigenous."

For me, this "becoming indigenous" does not have to do with the New Age movement, or with the appropriation, commodification, and consumption of native traditions. It does have to do with the paying of respects (again, I am quite conscious of the English term "to pay" in this phrase), or the offering of respect in concrete gestures of solidarity with the contemporary struggles for sovereignty of indigenous peoples, as well as in the validation of indigenous belief systems. These recognitions have been a long time coming.



On the last day of the "Reinventing Nature" conference, Frank Maurer led some of the participants on an exploration of the ecology of the Quail Ridge wilderness preserve.

Photo courtesy of the Program in Nature and Culture, UC Davis.



# Humanities News

## Congressional Legislation Update

As *Humanities Network* went to press, the U.S. Senate had not yet passed the reauthorization bill which would extend federal funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and the Institute of Museum Services (IMS) for two years without substantive changes. The House of Representatives passed its version of the reauthorization bill on October 14, 1993. The Senate is expected to begin deliberations on the reauthorization bill early in the second session of the 103rd Congress, which reconvenes on January 25, 1994. The California Council of the Humanities relies on NEH, through the NEH Division of State Programs, for nearly 85 percent of its funds. This is in spite of the Council's increasingly successful efforts to raise funds of its own.

Congress did, however, pass the fiscal year 1994 Interior Appropriations bill, which includes funding for NEH, NEA and IMS. The bill, signed into law by President Clinton on November 11, 1993, appropriates \$177.491 million to NEH in fiscal year 1994, an increase of \$78,000 (or less than one-tenth of one percent) over the 1993 appropriation. Of that amount, \$28.258 million will go to the NEH Division of State Programs, which supports the activities of humanities councils in every state and in several U.S. territories. That figure is unchanged from fiscal year 1993.

The California Council for the Humanities will receive \$1,417,300 to carry out public humanities programming in the nation's most populous state. That is a \$5,900 (or four-tenths of one percent) increase over 1993. The 1993 allocation for the Council was \$1,411,400, an increase of \$17,600 (or one and one-quarter percent) over the 1992 figure. During the 1990 to 1992 reporting period (the last period for which complete figures are available) Council-supported public humanities programs were attended or viewed by more than 37,000,000 people. Council-supported humanities programs are free and open to the public.

Also during the second session of the 103rd Congress, the Senate is likely to take up a budget-cutting plan introduced by Senator Bob Kerrey (D-NE). Among the cost-saving proposals in the Kerrey plan is one which would cut federal funding for NEH and NEA by 10 percent over the next five years. The Kerrey plan is virtually identical to the Penny/Kasich amendment which was defeated in the House of Representatives by a narrow margin (213-219) after White House officials argued that passage would adversely affect programs related to Administration health care proposals. Senators Bob Dole (R-KS) and Kay Bailey Hutchinson (R-TX) have also introduced a plan to reduce the federal budget deficit by \$50 billion. This plan also includes a proposal to cut the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts by 10 percent over five years.

## Proposal Writing Workshops

Workshops are scheduled during February for people interested in submitting proposals at the Council's April 1 deadline.

**In San Francisco**  
Wednesday February 16 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

**In Los Angeles**  
Tuesday February 15 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
Thursday February 17 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

**In San Diego**  
Wednesday February 16 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

The workshops are free, but advance registration is required. Please call the nearest Council office (415/391-1464 in San Francisco, 213/623-5993 in Los Angeles, and 619/232-4020 in San Diego) to register and confirm dates and locations.

## Skaggs Grant To Support Touring Humanities Museum Exhibitions

A grant of \$12,500 from the Oakland-based L. J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation to the Council will make possible two touring exhibitions that will reach four museums throughout the state in 1994. The museums are members of the California Exhibition Resources Alliance (CERA), a statewide coalition of smaller humanities museums, many of them serving rural communities.

The Skaggs grant will help the museums host two exhibitions which are touring nationally. The first, "Textile Diaries," presents quilts as eloquent statements about women's personal and communal experience. Now open at the Grace Hudson Museum in Ukiah, with a day of lectures and special events focusing on the art of quilting scheduled for March 19, "Textile Diaries" moves later to museums in Corona and Yuba City. The other exhibition funded by Skaggs is "Audubon's Animals and Birds," a look at how wild-life lithographs shaped American and European attitudes about nature. It opens at the Community Memorial Museum in Yuba City March 5, and will be seen subsequently in Ontario and Apple Valley.

Significantly, it was the Skaggs Foundation whose grant in 1988 helped launch the Rural Museums Consortium. That six-member alliance of northern California museums was the parent of the present fifteen-member statewide coalition, which is now a Council-conducted project of CCH.

# THE PUBLIC HUMANITIES AND THE ACADEMIC: *continued*

unreservedly in his placing support for humanistic research and scholarships among his highest priorities. There is too little support for the best research as it is.

But the scope and scale of what is termed "research" is still a vital public matter. As a professor of literature I belong to the Modern Language Association of America. It has about 30,000 members. What are their aspirations? I do not know, but simply ask: Does our nation need 30,000 literary researchers? It certainly needs 30,000 teachers of literature, and more.

The matter is worse. For much of what passes for humanistic

research these days—I would not call it the best but the worst research—is so subjective, so cynical, so devoid of belief in communication or meaning, so careless of (when not positively hostile to) the evidence and logic that empower responsible agreement and make informed understanding shareable, and is offered up in so dense and ugly a jargon—that one cannot imagine its usefulness to a sane society.

It is as if a large section of the academic humanities had finally stumbled onto the position reached by poetry and the visual arts about 1910, when they set about to demolish the smug,

failed certainties of the bourgeois nineteenth century. By now, all that is old stuff. We have learned it almost too well, and don't need more of it. What concerns us now are the people of the twenty-first century, bourgeois or not, inhabitants of untenable cities and endless suburbs, who will be neither smug nor certain, and who will desperately need a humanities that promotes communication, alleviates alienation, and exemplifies the possibility of human community.

The answer to the problem of recruiting academics for the public humanities is not to change the reward system for promotion and tenure, if by that

we mean setting out bait to attract the same careerists. The answer is to get another kind of person, and another conception of academia, into our colleges and universities. If, as has been repeatedly said, academia will never reform itself, then the informed public must help reform it, with all the means it has.

We are one of those means. I submit that by our own commitment we have a deep responsibility to add this to our many other tasks. If we succeed, we will never again lack academic humanists as partners.



# Humanities News

## Officers and New Council Members Announced

At its December meeting the Council chose new officers and members. **Jay Mechling**, professor of American Studies at UC Davis, was elected as chair; **Jim Kennedy**, a journalist from Santa Monica, was elected vice chair; and **Linda Crowe**, system director at the Peninsula Library System, was elected treasurer. Officers serve a two-year term.

At the same meeting, the Council selected five new members who begin their three-year terms in March of 1994.

**Isabel Alegria** is a San Francisco-based reporter for National Public Radio (NPR). In the past, Alegria has worked as a producer, reporter, editor, and executive producer for NPR and public radio stations in El Paso, Texas and San Diego, California. She has



also served as a grant reader for the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. She is currently the president of Latinos in Communication, a San Francisco-based organization for Hispanic media professionals, and is a board member of California Chicano News Media Association. Alegria holds a bachelor's degree in communications from Stanford University.

**Robert Benedetti** is dean of the College of the Pacific, the liberal arts college within the University of the Pacific in Stockton. He is also a professor of political science at the college. Before coming



to the University of the Pacific, Benedetti was provost, chair of the division of social sciences, and professor of political science at New College of the University of South Florida. While in Florida he served as a board member and as chair of the Florida Endowment for the Humanities. Benedetti holds a bachelor's degree in English and political science from Amherst College and a doctorate in political science and American government from the University of Pennsylvania.

**Ramón A. Gutiérrez** is professor of history and ethnic studies at the University of California at San Diego, where he is the founding director of the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity and the founding chair of the ethnic studies department. He is the author of *When Jesus Came the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846*, for which he was awarded the 1992 Frederick Jackson Turner prize and the American Studies Association's 1992 John Hope Franklin award. In 1983 Gutiérrez was named a MacArthur Fellow. He holds a bachelor's degree in history and Latin American studies from the University of New Mexico at Albuquerque and a doctorate in history from the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

**David Mas Masumoto** is freelance writer and a vineyard and orchard farmer in Del Rey. His books include *Distant Voices: A Sansei's Journey to Gila River*



*Arizona, Silent Strength*, a collection of short stories, *Home Bound*, and *Gathering Before the Storm: The Fresno Assembly Center*. Another book, *Country Voices: The Oral History of a Japanese American Family Farm Community*, was the basis of a Council-supported exhibition at the Fresno Metropolitan Museum exploring the traditions and cultural changes that have shaped the Japanese American farm communities of the San Joaquin Valley. Masumoto holds a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of California at Berkeley and a master's degree in community development from the University of California at Davis.

**Peter H. Pennekamp** is the executive director of the Humboldt Area Foundation in Eureka. He was formerly the vice president of National Public Radio's cultural programming and program services division and the



director of the inter-arts program at the National Endowment for the Arts. Pennekamp was also executive producer of *Wade in the Water*, a 26-hour radio series on the sacred music of the African-American tradition. He served on the editorial board of *Inside Arts* magazine and as a grants review panelist for both the Ford and Rockefeller foundations. Pennekamp holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Humboldt State University.

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CALIFORNIA COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES

The Colifornio Council for the Humonities is o partnership of public and acodemc life whase purpose is to invite oll Califarnians to a lifelang explaration of the cultures, the stories, ond the volues thot constitute our mast vital inheritance.

Since its creation in 1975, the Cauncil has oworded more than \$12 million to mare than 1300 non-prafit argonizotians, enobling them to produce exhibits, films and rodia progroms, ond lecture series and conferences on topics of significance to Colifornians.

The Cauncil olsa serves Califarnians with projects of its own. These include the notionol dissemination of o Scholars in the Schools program; publicatians distributed to libraries, scholors and the public; coordination and support of local and statewide coalitions; an initioive an the camman gaod; ond, in 1994, a community project in San Diego, o Matheroad pilat praject in Las Angeles, o chautouqua tour commemorating Thomas Jeffersan's 250th birthday, and o ten-city cultural diversity program series presented by the Smithsonion Institution.

The Council is the state ofiliate of the Notional Endawment far the Humanities ond is supported by gronts from NEH, carporations and faundotions, ond by contributions from individuals. An independent, nat-for-prafit argonizotion, the Council receives na stote funds.

Major gront proposals are accepted on April 1 and October 1. Proposal planning gront requests, minigrant requests, ond film-and-speaker minigrant requests may be submitted at any time. Interested nanprafit argonizotians should request o free copy of the updated 1992-1993 Guide to the Grant Program fram the San Francisco Office.

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